

Country's First K-8 Urban Farm School Sprouting in San Francisco

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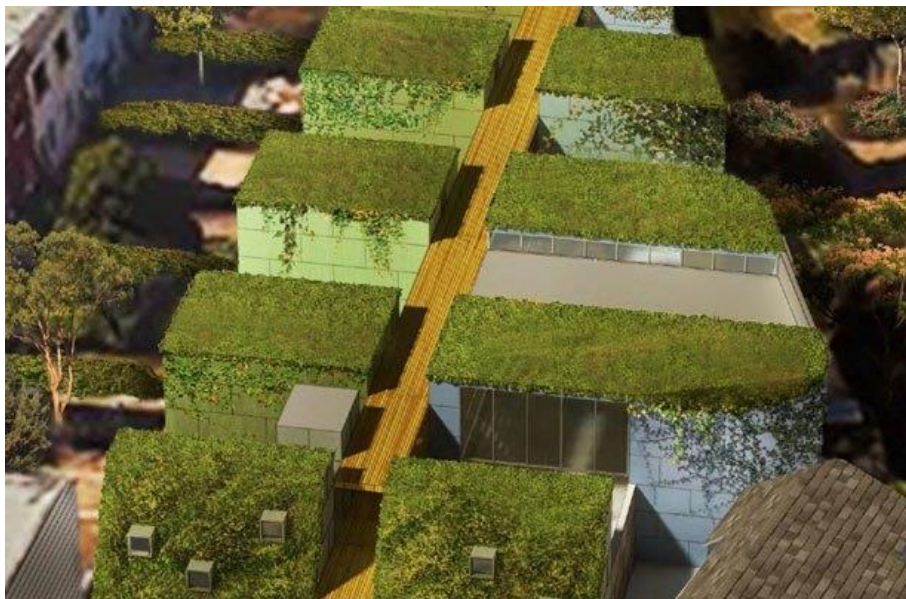
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Photo via Golden Bridges School and Inhabitat.

by [Robin Plaskoff Horton](#)

With an ecology and [farming curriculum](#) intended to “cultivate in the students and the staff a consistent and ongoing relationship with the outdoors,” San Francisco’s Golden Bridges School, a K-8 urban farm school, unveiled plans for its new campus, an [urban farm school](#) that will include a [green roof](#) and facade, an [expansive green space](#) containing an orchard, [edible garden](#), [chicken coop](#), and an [outdoor kitchen](#).



A Living Building With Green Roofs and Outdoor Classrooms

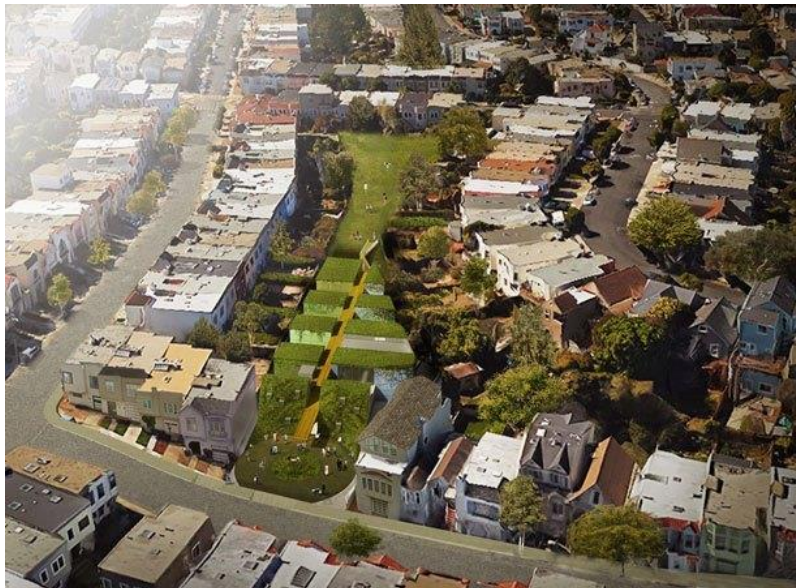
Designed by [Natoma Architects](#) in conjunction with landscape designers [SWA landscape](#), the new campus—74% of which will be open space—is intended to create a seamless interplay between its indoor classrooms and outdoor teaching spaces.



Its two-story foliage covered “living building” will feature a golden bridge unifying the center of the structure with its classrooms, courtyards, and gathering spaces for students and the community.



Creating a “school hidden behind a hill,” the [plant-clad building](#) will slope down in the front with a green roof that will provide insulation and water retention to absorb storm water runoff and prevent flooding, while also filtering the air and absorbing sound.



Plants and flowers on the roof will create a [habitat for the pollinators](#) that are vital for agricultural production.



SWA San Francisco

Landscape Concept Design

Golden Bridges School
Landscape Concept Design
2016.05.05



Hands-On Learning on An Urban Farm

Preschoolers through 8th graders will work on the farm every day, growing kale, zucchini, onions, and other vegetables and herbs. The school's 55 students are already experienced urban farmers: for the past two years, they've been tending sections of the urban farm that currently occupies the one acre lot purchased for the new campus. Six years ago [Caitlyn Galloway](#) and another gardener turned the [once vacant and overgrown plot](#) into [Little City Gardens](#), an urban farm that has not only unified the neighborhood, but makes a profit by selling produce to local restaurants.



Curriculum Based on Waldorf Education Program

The Golden Bridges School's curriculum is based on Austrian writer, educator and social activist Rudolph Steiner's holistic and progressive [Waldorf Education](#) model. Steiner's philosophy, "anthroposophy," led to the development of the biodynamics movement, a holistic, ecological and ethical approach to farming, gardening, food and nutrition.



Rooted in the Waldorf Education program which incorporates the tenets of biodynamics into its ecological and place-based curriculum, Golden Bridges' curriculum focuses on "the relationship of the human being to their surrounding environment, with attention to earthly and seasonal phenomenon, sustainable practices, stewardship and nurturing the experience of nature in the city."



Cultivating a Sustainable Future

And the school goes beyond community mindedness: [Golden Bridges](#)'s tuition is based on need and ability to pay—a third of the school's students attend on scholarship with another third of the families providing tuition assistance. That's really cultivating good stuff.

Via [Inhabitat](#). Photos via *Golden Bridges School* and *Inhabitat*.
